

## Functional Skills Level 2 ENGLISH

Paper 1 Reading

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The three sources that follow are:

**Source A:** a newspaper report

**Source B:** a leaflet for tenants

**Source C:** an extract from a podcast

**Please open the Insert fully  
to see all three sources**

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**Source A****Last Day in Paradise: How A Fire Swallowed A Town**

On 8<sup>th</sup> November 2018, residents of Paradise in California awoke to a noxious orange atmosphere and chunks of burning wood falling from the sky.

Wildfires are a normal part of the forest ecosystem in California, and over the past decade parts of Paradise have been threatened by at least four fires. More than 200 structures were destroyed by fire in 2008.

Global warming has contributed to years of drought, leaving forests achingly dry and littered with dead trees. Fire experts call this vegetation 'fuel'.

Evacuations were ordered but the situation quickly spiralled into something far more terrifying. Soon the flames were being propelled downslope by gale-force winds. A blizzard of ash was falling from the sky as if from a volcano and coating the pine trees. Embers blown around by the extreme winds started a number of spot fires.

Paradise sits on a high ridge between two deep valleys and there is only one main route out of the town. As many of the inhabitants of Paradise all tried to leave at once, the result was gridlock. Cars, camper vans and trailers inched along as the fire outpaced them and trees and homes went up like torches. In the memory of one of the evacuees, everyone was composed and calm.

Outside it was growing dark, as if an eerie twilight were falling at 9 am. "Once I got outside, the smoke, the darkness – it looked like midnight," said Lynn Pitman, a school teacher evacuated along with her pupils. The winds were blowing plumes of smoke low over the town, forming a choking, swirling shroud about 1500 metres deep.

By now, the fire was raging from building to building. "It was panic," Firefighter Ken Lowe said, "pitch black, trees lighting up like matches all around, power lines arcing, embers skidding through the sky like amber snowflakes."

It took firefighters 17 days to bring the fire under control, by which time it had destroyed 14 000 homes, including almost 90% of those in Paradise, and 86 people had lost their lives.

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**Source C****Professions Podcast**

**Presenter:** Hello and welcome to the latest in our series of podcasts about careers. Today we're considering the role of firefighter with Head of Fire Service Recruitment, Jonas Carter.

Some people may picture a firefighter as a muscular bloke climbing down a ladder from a smoke-filled room with a helpless female over his shoulder.

**Jonas:** Frankly, that's nonsense. Today's firefighters are just as likely to be female themselves. And there's far more to the job than rescuing people from burning buildings.

**Presenter:** Such as?

**Jonas:** Clearly the main role is responding to and extinguishing fires. But you may also be required to deal with chemical spillages and Road Traffic Collisions which might involve using cutting equipment to free a trapped driver or passenger.

**Presenter:** That all sounds very exciting but dangerous too. What makes a good firefighter?

**Jonas:** We need people who are confident, have good problem-solving skills and are able to use their initiative. Obviously there is extensive training, but it's important to start with the right raw material. Firefighters also need to be versatile as the role is very varied.

**Presenter:** In what way?

**Jonas:** As well as putting out fires, we work closely in the community to help prevent fires happening in the first place. We do this by visiting people in their own homes to educate them in fire prevention including advice on such things as smoke alarms. If a fire does break out, it's important that people have an escape route: we can assist with identifying and planning this. We also train fire wardens in schools, community centres and libraries.

**Presenter:** Thanks for now. Join us after the break to find out how to apply.

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